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THE POEMS
of
Jas. Hebblethwaite

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Australian poetry will feel the loss of James Hebblethwaite. He filled a place all his own. The sacred Muse has not flourished greatly in these latitudes, but he sang undauntedly of higher things; yet not of them only. In his "New Poems" (Edward A. Vidler, Melbourne), he is seen constantly under the spell of ancient legend and modern domesticity. A more restrained Herrick, a less aggressively virile Charles Kingsley, he made "the best of both worlds." He knew "the troubled perfume of a languorous day." And, "Oh, those old heroic days!" he says elsewhere, "They have their being still beneath green boughs, in the infinitudes of noble souls." It is really interesting to see this modern pastor admit, "I wander in a sun of pagan scent," or bid the reader, "Come, ride into the purple past. The years of old romance." Later in the volume, the religious note becomes more insistent. The blank verse is good, and there is an almost pathetic analysis of the state of mind of Ariel, left alone on the island, and reduced to envying "the now remorseful Caliban." The book fairly sustains, although it does not appreciably raise, the standard of the veteran poet now lost to us. Of the following extracts, the Tennysonian blank verse of the first is spoken by Ariel, the second shows the poet in his more lyrical vein, and the last may be taken as his fitting epitaph:—

Free! I may wander where the foliage roo's
Brown solitude; or where the rivulet
Runs through the long green oaken glade, and
birds

Flit on the sun-white stones, and melody
Fills all the hollow, and upon the grass
Blue shadows quiver; or with mounting larks
In ecstasy sing in the eye of heaven;
Or watch the tide swirl in its narrow rift
Of splintered rock; or view the twilight woods,
Wood with the rustle of the homing birds,
Upon the lonely hills, while in the vales
The streams that in the all-pervading hum
Of summer are unheard, grow audible
Beneath the stars—but still the joy is not.

So pure the dawn, so clear the dawn,
I feel my soul is made anew
To sing upon the silent lawn
And through the wood's far nestling blue;
Nay, she would throat it with the lark
High soaring in the flowering May
Above the dewy pasture spark,
Calling along the meadow way.

Yet I have sought pure Beauty all my days,
That Something light, ethereal, that blooms
Beyond all earthly loveliness, and lays
A spell on troubled Man, and mighty dooms.

THE
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To Mrs Cox

with kindest regards

from
James Webb Shawale.



THE POEMS
OF
JAMES HEBBLETHWAITE



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The Poems
of
James
Hebblethwaite



Edward A. Vidler
The Olderfleet, Collins Street West, Melbourne
1920

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BY WAY OF A PREFACE

FAREWELL, my Muse, our days are almost gone,
And we have sung a little of our heart,
Its passion and its ruth: why linger on?
Why stay? for we must part as all do part.
Essential soul, pure, perilous and bright,
I imaged thee; and underneath the sky,
This roof of azure blue and sunshine white,
Built thee fair towers that shadowed from on high.
And we have heard the thunder of the feet
Of great Apollo's horses, with desire
Climbing unhasting to their palace seat
In the fierce blaze of their undaunted fire.
And while the twilight heavens were flowering far
With angel glows that Love for Love to burn;
We sang the flitting swallows on the bar,
With songs of Hellas for their glad return.
And we have known a mighty Chivalry
Quest down the dreaming woodland for the Grail,
Whose cohort of bright Seraphim they see
Lighting the patrimonies of the vale.
And we have touched the unessential heart
That with sad knowledge of no farewell sigh,
Lingering awhile, reluctant to depart,
Goes groping dumbly for some place to die.
And an Imperial use have we essayed:
To give the wanderer songs and scents of home,
To keep that memory green when all things fade,
To waft his children o'er the ocean foam:
To wake the longing of the native-born
To see the meadows of that far-off strand,
To tread those ruined aisles grey and forlorn—
Yet still the more to love his own dear land.

BY WAY OF A PREFACE

If we have sung of grief 'tis not to daunt
But to enlarge the heart with pity's tears;
If in the past we've sought each tender haunt,
'Tis but to face the future without fears.
What gain from Life through which we darkling rush?
O hardly got! be good, be glad, be pure.
Live in the might that flows from the soul's hush,
Be pitiful, create, learn to endure:
Urge headlong through the billowing, boundless deep
The stallions of the passions, free, unmaimed,
But under rule imperious, and keep
Their flaming frontlets to Heaven's gate unblamed. . . .
Ah, we have wandered on the Silent Shore,
And tenderly have swung a passing knell
For those dear lovers who will come no more:
Muse, are we of these times? Farewell, farewell.

A CRADLE SONG

NOW rides the Moon, a silver boat,
Sailing upon a deep blue sky ;
While trembling signal stars afloat
Mark where the ships at anchor lie.

“O Moon, ahoy! the Captain’s here!
Open your clear and curving side,
And on the poop, without a fear,
We’ll rove for aye the ocean tide. . . .

Ah, no! you are too strange for me,
Too wan for my sweet, tender guest ;
Our Baby’s voyaging must be
In dreams upon his Mother’s breast.”

MUSHROOMS

THE sun-white clouds were still upon
The breast of Parlic Fell,
Shadowing a lonely sunshine land
Of elmy field and dell.

With eyes cast down in childhood's wont
For wondrous things and new,
We saw the mushroom's fairy tops
Whitening the grey-sweet dew.

Our wicker nets we filled with them,
Laughing and calling both,
But O, we gathered magic too,
Culled with that mystic growth.

THE CHILDREN'S MINUET

A H! ah! this is our holiday,
Trip it with laughter again;
Then gracefully bend in a mode that is olden,
And dance to the minuet's strain.

Slow! slow! silent and courteous—
Stately the minuet goes,
And sweet the refrain to the youths and the maidens
In satin and powder and rose.

See! see! just for a moment
The old world is with you again;
And now it has vanished and we are but children
Who dance to the minuet's strain.

MERRYMIND

MERRYMIND, Merrymind, whither art thou
roaming?

Merrymind, Merrymind, nay, art thou sleeping yet?

O to us, sweet minstrel dear, wilt thou not be
homing?

Or we shall forget.

Vale of Toil so drear and waste, hear him now
advancing,

Playing on the golden strings, the midnight maiden's
gift,

Breaks the sunshine on the hills, the Princess falls
to dancing

In her silken shift.

O the joyfulness and kissing of that fiddle's flowings,

Giving rest and happiness, and laughter delicate!

Fling from out this iron world to his merry bowings,

O be not too late!

Elves that live in far blue glades, gnomes in caverns
daunting,

Wisps that love the moist green earth, the sylphs of
sunshine made,

Rugged silvans of the dale, come with mystic
haunting,

We are not afraid!

MERRYMIND

Down the ways of Faerie, from the turrets crazy,
From the cobwebbed quarrel pane, the grey of the
 old niche,
Float the Fairy Godmothers, comely as a daisy,
With their gifts so rich.

Lancelot, Lancelot, ride with song and gleaming,
Robin wind in greenwood-shaw thy yearning
 silvery horn ;
Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down thy hair a-beaming,
Yellow as the corn.

O ye Swans, ye wild white Swans, spread each
 mighty feather,
Bearing in the barky net the life of one so dear,
Urge your lofty pinions through the stormy
 weather—
Wing, the Isle is near !

Imogen, Imogen, in the forest sleeping,
Lift those lids of heaven's own tinct, of white and
 azure laced,
Rise and cast the flowers aside—what love went to
 their heaping !
With thee we are graced.

All the dreams beyond, beyond, of a slumbering
 Fairy,
All immortal visionings caught on the raptured
 wing,

MERRYMIND

All the heart of man can love, all his fancies airy,
Join our joyous ring.

Pride begone, thou hateful curse of narrowed blood
and breeding,
Cruel growth of heaviness and dull cold ignorance;
Come thou, golden Charity, lend to us thy leading
In our sunny dance.

THE SCHOOLBOY

THE schoolboy, on some vacant summer day
Beneath the elm, sees in the rude decay
Of prior's ancient stone a memory high
That gives a noble worth to work and play.

What joy when dewdrops globe the morning sun
To bathe and roam, and when the day is done
To watch afloat in the pale crescent light
The pirate royals 'mid the palm-trees run.

And when he kneels on Sunday in the Choir,
While the dark rays burn into dusky fire
Through Founder's lofty arms, is there no call
To faith and valour from his ghostly Sire?

September sunshine yellow as the leaves,
The home returns on red November eves,
The queer old lights haunting the crumbling
stones,
Into the fabric of his dreams he weaves.

And dear in after-muse will be the lore
Caught from the murmurings of the Latin shore,
Old balming of Life's melancholy gold,
Dim, quiet grief at peace for evermore.

THE LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE

O FAR, O far away, beyond the hills,
Over the level line of fairy sills,
The Dwellers of the Plain of Pleasure gaze
In sad remembrance of the ancient days.

In that old time the womb of morning bare
A purer gleam than ours, a thinner air,
And very earth was sown with light that grew
Upbreaking into founts of living blue.

The old brown cabins nested on the earth
A quiet folk of rustic love and mirth :
Lily and rose were in the women blent,
The heart of song with all the people went.

For primal voices still were heard around
From beast and bird, and in the solemn sound
Of moving waters ; and the gentle breeze
Gave mystic meanings to the leaves of trees.

Lit with a shyer gold than that of noon
Pure angel heads leaned to the rising moon :
To us they are but clouds with kindling fleece,
To them they were soft harbingers of peace.

The seasons flowed with song and laughter sweet,
And lightly passed the hours with flying feet ;
But by the winter hearth they gathered all
Their wan romance in music's dying fall.

THE LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE

And mothers knelt above their children's nest,
Or held the loved one to the deep-cleft breast,
Lest the Green People of the Forest wild
Should change the babe for a dark fairy child.

Ah, if some human bud were rapt away,
What watchings by the ford at noon of day,
When leaves were broad and long, in flame and
 shade,
And Love had power upon the Fairy Raid.

Beyond, beyond, low in the quiet West,
In Twilight Region, lay a Land of Rest,
Of passioned rest untouched by passion's stings,
Beneath calm-featured forms with folded wings.

At times a still small Voice was heard to call,
Naming some one on lasting sleep to fall—
So Death came then: the summoned one arose
And passed alone untroubled by dim foes.

But when some girl in beauty's early flower
Heard in the Rumour name and so brief hour,
And turned to say farewell, her lovers true
Went all the way and made Death name them too.

They come no more, they will not come again,
Those far-off days of old romantic pain,
For faith is dying, beauteous things are fled,
The heart of man to love and song is dead.

DEIRDRE'S LAMENT

FAREWELL, Alba; farewell, O eastern land,
No other isle can fairer be
Than Alba's island is to me,
Where noble Naisi kissed and held my hand
As we went walking on the yellow strand—
Farewell, O summer sea!

Farewell, Alba; thy woodland violets
Delaying made a royal bed
For the repose of a dear head.
Sweeter O far than the Ultonian nets,
Of webby gossamers that bring dim frets
And dreams of the old dead.

Farewell, Alba; the harvest of the glen,
The dawning swish of scythe and hook,
The noontide rest within the nook,
The flowing ale and song in but and ben,
And Naisi calling me from drinking-men
For love behind the stook.

Farewell, Alba; the soft blue dusk of eve;
The Children with their golden hair
Tangled with fur from some dim lair,
Their warm white limbs dispread, while minstrels
weave,
Around the fire, The Foray of Queen Maeve,
O brooding Children there!

DEIRDRE'S LAMENT

Farewell, Alba ; I weep to leave thee so,
Thy willows bowed o'er love's desires
Where pale the embers of our fires,
And glades are long, and winding waters flow,
O whispering winding waters how they go
Beside the shieling byres !

Farewell, Alba ; farewell, our cloven tower,
Where the waves sang unto our ear
Without a note of wailing fear ;
And O farewell our woven reedy bower,
Where more than moons arose in the loved hour,
And stole the silent deer.

Farewell, Alba ; not nameless shalt thou be,
Though grass shall grow our graves above
Thou wilt have murmurs of our love,
For all his days beside the moaning sea
Phelim shall sing our story for a fee,
The tears that harpings move.

Farewell, Alba ; the Sons of Usnach call,
Fergus hath waked their love of home,
And now to Erin they must roam,
Where the great doom is waiting but to fall,
Waiting in Uladh, in King Conan's hall,
Waiting beyond the foam.

DEIRDRE'S LAMENT

Farewell, Alba ; earth open wide thy doors,
Weep for my beauty that it brings
Sorrow upon the Sons of Kings,
Beauty that high above all ancient lores
Of Queens magnificent in wonder soars
And blood-red message flings.

THE YOUNG KNIGHT'S CHANT

YOUR love would make a shepherd lad a flame,
Ennobling every drop within his veins,
And famousing for ever his great name
Beyond all earthly stains. . . .

O come and let the sunshine flush your cheek,
Else sweetly cold and clear ; Cecilia's robe
Of amber light shall dye your breast so meek,
And sparkles of wet green the dew shall globe
Upon your gown ; and I will sing of faint
Reluctancy that 'longs to pucelage ;
And for my very Saint
I'll make romaunts from an empurpled page
For winter winds and rains.

Vawards of fame and dantours of the world,
In flashing steel, our golden flag unfurled,
On foamy-wet destreres, through the green glade,
With lifted ventayles, tossing plume and blade,
We'll ride with you, our Queen,
Girl of braced drum and spears and knighthood lean.

I shall not fear the dungeon black and strong
Within the closed wall, the yearning air
That waves the thin poor grass, if but my song
Be filled with you, O love ! nor shall I care
For the faint swallow shadows blown along,
When I shall dream you there !

THE LAND OF GREECE

AH, days that to immortal joy we gave,
Leisured, unhindered, crowned with a bright
dream,

Ilyrian or by Ilissus wave,

Those hours of childlike gaze at Life's soft beam,
Their threnes for fading beauty, 'mid the gleam
Of noble marbles veined with violet
Against a sea of azure, while the stream
Sang of some thought eluding memory yet,
Some faint felicity we may not quite forget!

White holy order in that purest air
The Parthenon arose, and evermore
Faming the frieze our chivalry so fair
Rode, and below in blossomed life they bore
The robe of Pallas stained with earth and ore,
Balming the breeze and musking glorious name—
High Salamis and Marathon and more—
And as the priests unto the Altar came
The white uncorded bulls sank to the thin clear
flame.

On wings Iberian purple let us fly
To the grey isle and winding olive vale,
Green-boughed Idalium whence comes no sigh,
Or reedy Cnidus where the gentle gale
Flutters the garments of the maidens pale
Who sing the heroes and their lofty mound;
Or we will watch the youth in the vine-dale
All crimson-thighed from the rough cistern bound,
Chanting the satyr-song upon the swarded ground.

O WHITE FOAM-BORN

W HITE-bosomed one, so tall and pure,
Thou memory of the wave,
April of blue and laughing lure,
Yet nobly grave—
Wake us from sleeping
Though but to weeping,
Weeping!

O girl of regal might, O petal pale,
Wonder of wilding grace,
Impurpler of the hyacinthine dale,
Bend thy dear face,
And with thy beaming
Passion our dreaming,
O longed-for dreaming!

Or isles or continents that hold afar
Thee of unnumbered sighs,
Plead that she fill again love's waning star,
And yield us burning lips and dewy eyes
That now are paling,
And slowly failing,
O failing!

ANTIGONE

METHOUGHT I heard a melancholy sound,
A song divine of pure immortal breath,
And loitering near the Parthenon I found
The mourners of Antigone's lone death.

Wreathed with wild olive from the sacred grove
Where flows the crystal of Castalian fount,
The secret home of god Apollo's love,
Went the fresh youth of valley, plain, and mount.

This flower of virgins made a perfect dirge
For her who sought so timelessly her grave,
And strewed white violets from the ledged verge
Of Helicon, white as the foamy wave.

In that pellucid air they walked along
By marbles graved in gold and fair with frost
Of snowy blossoms, and they sang a song
Of grief for a great House gone down and lost.

And so they came thus sorrowing with tears
To the carved rocky seats before a stage
Whereon Antigone's last faltering fears
Enacted were from an old yellow page.

She stood, a delicate and holy thought,
Clothed in her lovely flesh, with gesture sweet
Unto the olive land so finely wrought,
And all that once had stirred her young heart's
beat.

ANTIGONE

Her eyes were full of tears ; she did not hear ;
Her lips that curved for love were pale and mute ;
Her soul, regretting all that she held dear,
Was whispering farewell to her low lute.

Thus through a dream reluctantly she made
Her way to death, without reproach or cry,
For Zeus this girl so sweet and unafraid
By other law had aye foredoomed to die.

ULYSSES

THE wise Ulysses climbs the rude old stair,
His wave-worn raft sways idly at his feet,
To lift the drooping sail there is no air
And stillness reigns around, save for the beat
Of the faint ripples that the quay-stones meet
With a lipped sigh; and on the amber floor
Of weed-grown rock flit golden shadows fleet,
And in the light-blown murmurs evermore
Ulysses hears a moan for happy days of yore.

In silent sunshine lies each winding street
With flowers all garlanded in a rich flow,
There comes no voice from the fair palaced seat,
The dawn's blue air is in a soft pure glow
From some divinest wellspring's overflow
Of tender bliss, and in the rainbow dew,
And on the statue's limbs of carven snow,
And on the columned marble's peachy hue,
The glad young morning light trembles and blooms
 anew.

O hush! speak not! but list the silvery sound
Of flutes and pipes, the merry clashing din,
The cry of clear sweet voices floating round
The Temple porch—O can it be a sin
To dream Apollo and his shining kin
Have left the glittering mount? In coloured weeds
They slowly loiter past where keen and thin

ULYSSES

The hot light cleaves the ebon shade. . . . Who leads
This train of gentle youth fresh from the flowery
meads?

Faint haunting winds of silvan fragrance breathe,
The dews of morn about their garments cling,
And round their heads light-flaming flowers they
wreathe,
Scattering the half-ope'd buds the children bring,
And wavering move in a slow charmed ring
To sacred song—then on again they roam,
Ulysses of their band, and clearly sing
In ravished harmony: Ah, Spring's white foam,
Ah, leave the house of stone, the green earth is your
home.

THE PERFUMIER

FLEEING Darius left among the prey
His casquet of sweet ointments, richly dight
With precious pearls and glorying stones of light,
Cloud-fire and diamond spark, carbuncled ray.

Around the warrior king crowded the Greeks,
Haught features shadowed by their plumed helms,
Still grasping shields brightened with splendid
realms,
But now distained by blood of battle reeks.

Of royal Persia the Perfumier had
Old magic scents from the dim mystic East,
Old fragrance from the heart of a vain feast,
Perfumes that wake faint memories sweetly sad.

And laughing or with rolling eyes a-gleam,
They showed him uses for the Cabinet,
For delices are not for warriors wet
With dusky blood mingled in sweaty stream.

Ah, other days! great Alexander took
And oped the casquet's mouth and softly slipt
Within its depths old Homer's manuscript,
Naught being too costly for that precious book!

ST. PTOLEMY

THERE was a King called Ptolemy—
He sent across the violet sea
To Athens, and in golden days
Brought home of Aeschylus his plays.

A royal treasure for the loan
He lost for aye without a moan ;
And poured before the Poems wine,
And gave them honours half-divine.

And Athens meditated war
Upon the kingly thief afar,
But let with time her soreness heal,
For he could fight as well as steal.

So, loving much, he was forgiven
And set within the Bookman's heaven :
Now may there ever sinless be
Such lovers as St. Ptolemy !

THE FOREST

ONCE as I lay a-sleeping
Beneath an ancient oak,
There stole to me a maiden,
One of the silvan folk.

Pale sweet her face as moonbeam
That through the forest slips—
Beneath her hair's twin darkness
She kissed my dreaming lips.

PERDITA

THE sea coast of Bohemia
Is pleasant to the view
When singing larks spring from the grass
To fade into the blue,
And all the hawthorn hedges break
In wreaths of purest snow,
And yellow daffodils are out,
And roses half in blow.

The sea coast of Bohemia
Is sad as sad can be,
The prince has ta'en our flower of maids
Across the violet sea ;
Our Perdita has gone with him,
No more we dance the round
Upon the green in joyous play,
Or wake the tabor's sound.

The sea coast of Bohemia
Has many wonders seen,
The shepherd lass wed with a king,
The shepherd with a queen ;
But such a wonder as my love
Was never seen before,
It is my joy and sorrow now
To love her evermore.

PERDITA

The sea coast of Bohemia
Is haunted by a light—
The memory fair of her sweet eyes
The fame of her brave knight ;
The princes seek its charmed strand,
But ah, it was our knell
When o'er the sea our Perdita
Went with young Florizel.

The sea coast of Bohemia
Is not my resting-place,
For with her waned from out the day
A beauty and a grace :
O had I kissed her on the lips
I would no longer weep,
But live by that until the day
I fall to shade and sleep.

VIOLETS

R OSES red of royal blood,
Yellow with a memoried flood
From dim silken folds and dust,
Cramosie or velour rust,
Mossed or blushed or scarlet-striped,
Love your praise hath whilom piped.

Nancies sweet and daffodils,
Cowslips from the meadow-hills,
Primroses with their cool smell,
Hyacinths from musky dell:
Pardon if with dreaming bliss
Violets in love I kiss.

SHAKESPEARE'S TOMB

O CALL the passionate heart, the dreaming
hand,
And we will fashion for his bones a tomb—
Letting the marbler Time
Smooth with a gentle touch the fretted bloom—
And guard it with a band
Of those who live so greatly in his rhyme:
Pale Desdemona, pure Cordelia,
Sweet Rosalind of tender forest play,
Miranda of the Isle, and Juliet
With eyes still dewy wet;
And roughened there shall Kings of hoary balm,
Proud peers and prelates, spring from massy stone,
Making withal a stately chant and moan
For him who sleeps above in centuried calm.

FOREST-FINDS

I WANDER round the hearths when eve is late
Of old unlatchers of the forest gate,
And O my heart swells with a plenitude
Of some vague sorrow over their far fate.

Who would not roam when leaves are fledged and
take

Love's elegies from Arden's forest-brake,

Remembering Rosalind gone by and dead—
Ah, bitter pang of sweet celestial ache!

When in the sunshine faint the shadows fade,
And leaves float down before rude winter's raid,

I love to find in an old stoup of stone,
Ghostly from ancient showers, worn bud and blade.

I walk at eventide with pilgrim feet
To the lone ground so melancholy sweet

Where love let fall earth's raiment for the morn,
And all the rarer dreams of sorrow meet.

YOUTH DREAMS OF SEPULCHRES

WITH book and friend let me grow old
And draw a quiet breath
As shadows lengthen and the slope
Runs down to dusky death,
With open eyes for the pure forms
Haunting the heart of things,
And ears for secret charities
Afloat on angel-wings.

So pass my life in those calm days,
Eternal thoughts my theme,
Persuading earthly joy and grief
Into a perfect dream :
And in the solitary hills,
By a lone churchyard gate
And low embattled tower and wall,
God's kindly time I'll wait.

There sheep would feed about my grave,
The scythe flame in the corn,
The lark rise singing to the blue,
The peewit call forlorn :
O nameless there would I be laid
In that green quiet place,
Not without tears—and so farewell,
Mute unresisting face.

MEADOW-LAND

DREAMING upon the day in the still eve,
With half-closed eyes I see thy haunted dales,
Thy lanes and dipping streams: and here I leave
The city's grime for thy wet golden trails,
Thy clocks of thistle-down, thy crannied rills,
Beneath the sunlight on the heather hills.

Within those grey and softly-lighted halls,
The Ribble murmuring by the low-browed door,
Now music's mourning melancholy falls,
And gently peopled is the mirrored floor,
And hand in hand under the flower-wreathed lance
They thread with happy hearts the stately dance.

Surely that ford of shame and grieving sings,
For sainted Henry on the forest lowe
Withered with raining tears those elfin-rings,
Knowing that sourest pang, betrayal's woe:
Poor soul! through the dewed launds one sunshine
day,
He rode with sorrow to the south away.

WISTFUL the olden time comes back,
And oft of him I dream
Who bore my name at Agincourt
Beside that Morning Beam,
Famed Harry, on St. Crispin's Day,
When the French Chivalry
Went down before the starved band
Of bowmen from the sea.

He loved the belling hart beneath
The green and whispering trees,
Soft chequerings on ancient sward,
The peaceful forest breeze ;
His Lady, slender, sweet and gay,
Dreamed in the twilight room
Of his return from hound and spear
Through the eve's amber gloom.

They were the gentle visitants
Of visionary hours,
They mingled with the loves and fears
Of childhood's happy bowers—
His sword is laid beneath his head,
His lady sleeps full fast,
And I salute them o'er the years,
Of all their race the last.

OLD CHRISTMAS

REEDED and gilt the organ looms
To a surmounting crown ;
The candles star vague golden glooms
Within the panel brown.

Strange pallors haunt the crumbling walls
From the deep windows' snow ;
The poppies on the carven stalls
In sleepy crimson blow.

And greener holly never shone
With clustered berries red,
Than that so softly bright upon
Beauty and Valour's bed. . . .

And now the folk from Worship fare
And part down the white ways,
And in the darkening winter air
Ruddy the home-lights blaze.

Old cronies draw about the flame,
And in the rose-red blooms
Tell ghostly tales of knight and dame
Haunting the dusky rooms.

OLD CHRISTMAS

The maids in silken splendour gowned,
Their eyes full of love's light,
Gaze at the 'gallants bending round
In gold brocade and white.

O Christmas of the ancient date!
Listening for tones long fled,
We hear thy gossip delicate
In Memoirs of the dead.

THE HAUNTED PRIORY

THE music of the Waits died on the moor
In murmuring echoes of sweet plaintive
sound,
And with a moan the wind stole by my door
And passed without along the snowy ground.

Above each hooded stone that marks the dead
The moonbeams seemed to whisper, "This is
best,"
And deeper slumber touched the quiet head,
And deeper patience calmed the sunken breast.

Within, the Yule light danced upon the oak,
On the white mistletoe and the red gleam
Of holly-berry, and upon the folk
In the black frames of old and tarnished beam.

My cheek sank to the pillow for a space
Of happy thinking, but a sighing breath
Awoke me, and I saw her clear pure face,
Dark-sweet as night, as thoughts of love and
death.

Ashes of yellow roses filled her hands—
She bowed above them, fading from my sight;
And now I haunt the ways of shadowy lands,
And watch the portals of the dreaming Night.

THE OLD SCOTS TALES

WHAT happiness beside the lowe,
The ripe-red glowing cave,
To watch the turf-heaps crumble down
And hear the tempest rave.

O while the shadows dance and creep
In the dusk-golden light,
Close round and tell the old Scots tales
And daff away the night.

They are compact of many things:
The murmur of the ford,
Sweet love and tender fantasy,
The long sigh of the sword.

I love their talk of plough and kine,
Of kisses in the nook,
Their melancholy strange and wild,
Their reverence for the Book.

THE HAPPY LIFE

I SING not armour in the light
Burning within the forest night,
Nor foray in the sunshine white
Of April weather ;
But of the happy life I croon
Led by a long and lazy loon
When summer skies are mild and boon
Amid the heather.

His Whatman paper, sable, paint,
He loves as ever monkish saint
Loved missal gold for the page quaint
Of Gospel Story ;
And joyously he tells his beads,
His colours' names, while golden reeds
Whisper, and morning dews are seeds
Of garnered glory :

The soft old red of Venice sails,
The ancient earth of Ombrian vales,
The sepia of Adrian gales,
And sunset yellow,
That stain of Eden's infant blue,
Lapis lazuli, crimson hue,
And Indian purple, olive, too,
So grave and mellow.

THE HAPPY LIFE

He dreams of Beauty day and night:
Of trees with blossoms winged and light,
Of solitudes wind-pure and bright,
 And peace unbroken,
Landscapes with cattle white and roan,
Lacework of grey and russet stone,
And groinings, doors set deep and lone
 With mystic token.

For him the buoys dance in the flood,
Salt-green and crimson as of blood,
And water-lights play on old wood
 With idle shimmer:
And all his heart with trembling goes
To where in phantom gold and rose
Rome of the antique sleepy woes
 Grows ever dimmer.

A FRIENDLY PLACE

WHEN in my mood I seek a cell
For charmed meditation deep;
My fancy's Waring weaves a spell,
And holy-day I keep.

My hearth's great shrine is of old oak,
My panels dark like ruby wine,
My tapestry's of hunter folk,
My bay of crystalline.

My bureau comes from a girl's bower,
Her perfume lingers faint from far;
My tall-boy shines like a fire-flower,
Or a vague golden star.

My viola de Gamba leans
Upon a lute by Annibale,
Or on a virginal by Queens
Touched in their passion pale.

OLD PORCELAIN

LOVE in my heart I find for those
Who kiss a jar of hawthorn bloom,
The gift of spring to a sweet Rose
Now sleeping in the tomb.

Me would content for daily view
A pot with a pink peach, or mound;
A slender vase of wavy blue
With dragons ramping round.

Of Celadon—the age of Sung—
I do desire a Peacock set;
With yellow of the days of Yung
The hours I could forget.

Of blue and white of Kung one must
Of course have perfect pieces five,
Or those in whose seed golden-dust
The lizards seem alive.

Now here are joys that cannot fade:
A rouge-pot for a lady bright,
A bowl verte on a stand of jade,
A beaker tender white.

Ah, what old China made so fair!
The egg-tint of a bird's wild hour,
The azure of the summer air,
The lilac of the flower.

SONG

THERE dwelt a King in Babylon,
 Babylon, Babylon,
There dwelt a King in Babylon,
 In Babylon the Great.

And Apame, that laughing girl,
Sunny bright of eye and curl,
Sweet with youth that laughing girl
 Struck him with her hand.

She took his crown from off his head,
Nod of which could strike one dead,
She took his crown from off his head
 And set it on her own.

Darius gaped upon the lass,
For laugh and tear she was his glass
He loved his kingdom for this lass,
 His crown fell at her feet.

PIERROT

PIERROT cries below,
Dim in the vale,
Where the night-winds blow
With a thin wail.

Wistfully he goes,
Sad to depart,
Folding a pink rose
Close to his heart.

Now his mandoline
Throbs in thick sighs,
For the might-have-been
Of Paradise.

Not the Shining Plains
In the dawn set,
But the sweet disdains
Of Pierette.

Gone the lightsome air,
Where more is meant;
Thin is the face with care;
Faded the scent.

Lone his pilgrim fate,
Passioning vain,
Haunting, delicate
With languid pain.

PIERROT

She lies in her grave,
And while he kneels
From the winsome knave
The teardrop steals. . . .

Roses red as wine
Seek for their nest
The sweet dividing line
Of her young breast.

THE LIBRARY

BRING from old treasuries the diamond globe
Of royal Kings, or from the plashy shore
Dim crusted ingots, or the Tyrian robe,
Empurpled alchemy, that evermore
Is balmed with sovran dreams; yet for the lore
Closed in this mellow space they may not be
A ransom! yea, though flaming foray bore
From fatherlands of peace immortal fee,
And dragon-guarded gold from oozings of the sea.

Here pumice-smoothed reclines the roll embossed
That sings of Helen from the battled wall
Gazing on the Greek helms and spears uptossed;
And of Achilles mourning the red fall
From the mort whiteness of the Virgin tall;
And of the pale dark girl so pure and sweet
In Scheria amid the festival
Wandering, or where the sea and river meet
Weeping with bosom tears the shame of her heart's
beat.

Yea, loiter here to see the passioning
Of earth's great souls pontifical, adream
Of human valour soaring on Love's wing;
And faint with mystic incense, odoured beam,
Pause in the thick of monumental gleam
Full of the last sad sweetness of dim woe,
And in the stillness watch the souls that stream

THE LIBRARY

From aisle and chapel, helm and bannered row,
With thoughts no clothing words can to another
show.

Lo, here the "Hours" of a young girl of France
Close clasped in wormy oaken boards that knew
The silver flash of Pharamound's light lance ;
The "Shepherd's Calender" as clear as new,
Original, immaculate, to view ;
And "Poems Lyrick, Pastorale" in green,
Bringing again the scent of vernal dew
Trodden by those who shall no more be seen,
The shepherd lovers true of a fair rustic Queen.

And here be leisures delicate and brown,
Breathing from ancient prints a soothing sleep,
An idling with the uncared face and town
In placid sunshine softly calm and deep ;
And there by the old flambeau horn, O peep
At blushing Beauty lighting from her chair,
And Lovelace bending with a heart at leap,
White periwig above the perfumed hair,
Ready for that pure Rose all rival swords to dare.

Ah, heaven! the folios clad in orient-blue,
Madonna-blue, and those in sunset-red
Of an imperial Saint, or the dark hue
From the dream-fading sheen of a cope shed,
Have fair large prefaces by men long dead

THE LIBRARY

Telling of loiterings and of slow delay!

And here from joy those nameless ones are fled,
And from their leaves rise odours of decay,
Faint precious mustiness as sweet as early May.

So in this hollow nest of fashioned age

Morn-music breaks upon the slumbering dust,
Soft is the light as from a vellum page
Made rich and beautiful with Time's worn rust;
And here I read of Faith that keeps Life's trust,
Endures its manage, yet can follow dream,
Confronting with heroic will Fate's must,
Lifting all Nature to the light and gleam
That shone on Gallilee and Golgotha's wan stream.

TO FRANCIS THOMPSON

IN mine own town thou camest to thy birth,
Immortal Francis; and beyond the sea,
An exile from that corner of dear earth,
I give thy memory all the poet's fee,
Lament, O pure and deep,
A sacred aftermath of sighs and tears
For sorrow's spell and sleep—
The unavailing sighs for early biers.

The Ribble murmuring of romantic dreams,
Of proud old names gone from the use of day,
With tranquil lapse and shallow pebbly streams
Flows by the Avenham of a child's hid play;
And was for feigning on
In wonder of the heart's first wilding beat
Thy perfect Helicon,
And fountained source of memories shy and sweet.

Ah, Preston of the lingering after-look,
Proud Preston of a vague antiquity,
Where old-time relics tarried in each nook
Abroad with evanescence, where each tree
Was loved with passioning!
Be prouder now of this great son of thine
Who with Heaven's choir doth sing,
And in the Kingdom drinketh Christ's new wine.

TO FRANCIS THOMPSON

He knew the fainter pad of meadow old,
The watered hedgerows dim with wonderment,
And tumbled in the daisies or the gold
Of waving buttercups, and smiling bent
Above the primrose bank,
The rarer cowslip of the open field,
Nay, loved the tangle rank
Of docks and nettles which quaint corners yield.

The sunny graveyard ridged with grassy mounds
Of aged Penwortham's green woodland cell,
He wandered in, and climbed its bricky bounds,
And drank the water clear of Mary's Well,
And at the evening chime
Sounding across the river in the air
Of twilight's saddest time,
He shook before a vision radiant, fair.

As pilgrims after prayer at holy shrines
Repose in dreams beneath the scented red
Of blowing roses, and the slanting lines
Of drifting blossom, he now makes his bed
In Paradisial light,
Within the murmur of the waves that flow
From the great throned White,
Crooning the songs the wavelets whisper low.

TO FRANCIS THOMPSON

The Christ who bore the sins of all the world,
And all its sorrows, on the bitter tree,
Empurpling it with His great flag unfurled,
Was thine, O Francis, for thy heart and knee ;
And when the Lord shall fare
And summon Earth from the rapt Cherub blaze,
Thy potent will be there,
Crowned with the exults of the poet's bays.

Up, like a golden flame, upon thy way
To feudatories of great dreaming lands,
Where in the leisure of unending day
Shall eager faces of the angel-bands,
With hair blown on the wind,
Peer o'er thy pageantry of victoried light
With passion unconfined
At thoughts the Seraphim might burning write.

How shall we build thy sepulchre's dim realm?
Cornered with mighty angels in strict guard
Brooding beneath the gloom of crowned helm,
Armoured and sworded for the imperial bard—
Darkened magnificence?
Ah, no! not these, but flowers flame-winged and
bright
Shall deck thy passing hence,
Babe buds to follow thee with infant light.

TO FRANCIS THOMPSON

O that great Chase of God upon the Soul
Through majesties of mourning cloud and flame,
Where in abysmal dark things formless roll;
And O that gentle calling of the name,
The swift insistent feet,
The tender violence of ardent love,
The offering sad and sweet,
And the calm rapture to the heights above!

The holy perfume of Love's passing wing,
The splendour of His glowing unseen eyes,
Thou hast divined; and many hearts shall sing
In the pure consolation of thy sighs;
And now farewell, farewell!
The funeral pyre of days yearns for thy breath
To chant her golden knell,
But thou art gone beyond the touch of death.

THE CATHEDRAL

THE summer noon curves for a little space
Into a stuated porch profound with gloom,
Like a grey cavern in a mountain face,
And leaving all the sunshine and the bloom
Adown the aisle I pass receding doors,
Withdrawn, recluse, on overwritten floors.

The forest echoes in the branched night
To my slow footfalls, in the casement high
Gleam angel robes, green-gold as chrysolite,
Or red as sard — the pomp of those who lie
In desuetude, no longer passionate,
But reconciled to sleep and 'during fate.

From niched place the prelates of the soul
Lean in the leisured smoke of tender eve
With mourning gesture . . . Gentle echoes roll
From the far closing gate; and shadows leave
The lofty apse and dim each trefoiled Sign,
Veiling the Eucharistic Corn and Vine.

ELIA

ON Crusoe Island were I cast forlorn
So I had Elia I should never be
Uncomforted, but from the summer morn
To golden eve, fronting the chaining sea,
Lapsed in his fair enchantments I should prove
That neither grief nor time could steal my love.

As he went bedward I would burn with him
Before the cobwebbed splendour of those arms
And word triumphant, range at will the dim
Deserted rooms, haunting their pensive charms,
Or in the cheerful days of wasp-loved heat
Read Cowley in the lowly window-seat.

Mine, too, would be those reverend College walks,
The trees of Christ's, the Magdalen groves so
green,
The Founder's dusky tomb, the silent talks
With shadows of the past — the might-have-been
Of lost humanities and scented books
From long ago in soothing cloistral nooks.

If thus his page could sweeten desert isle
And mournful fate: what magic might it lend
To pleasant Hertfordshire? By lane and stile
We trace the memoried way to Mackery End,
And, home returning, reach the Temple bound
Calmed by the ancient Fountain's evening sound.

ELIA

Dream-Alices he gives to lonely breasts,
Youthful romance's exquisite wild thrill,
And childless men amid their dark unrests
Weeping with inward tears the end so chill —
Untended by fond hands — have fathers grown
And loved his dream-born children as their own.

Dear are his vanities of cosy room
And charm of fireside talks by candle-light
Of bygone playbills, as in golden gloom
We closer sit, fearing the swifter flight
Of Time, who will not let us live for long
With piquet played for love, old tones and song.

Elia, a happy, happy fate is thine,
Beloved for aye! In thee thy lovers see
Thine angel-child, half human, half divine.
With sad sweet quips of tenderest irony
Gently beguiling those whose cheeks are wet
With hopeless tears of passionate regret.

VOYAGE

A GENTLER clime or death,
The calm physician saith,
And so to thinking:
Shall I with yearning seek those lovely fields
Of beauteous art Italia yields,
Or 'neath the Lion-flag, my future linking
With the dim Past, live out my shortened days?

Dear are those pale gold discs with faces dark,
The song wild as the thrilling of the lark,
But blood is dearer far than Time's fair loss,
So to the Southern Cross
I am hull down in glory all ablaze.

A DREAM RETURN

BY winding meadow paths, by rustic stiles
Sweet with love's whisper, down the sunny
lane

Where Gill lends murmurs, 'neath a scented rain
Of soft green light, I run the well-known miles
To be at home again.

The roof is very peaceful, guarded, low,
With old brown thatch and walls of hawthorn
white,
Mellowed and stained by sleepy Time's delight —
For here the moments linger, pensive, slow,
And gently falls the night.

And there are faces — long ago made dust —
That lift to mine, and arms that cling around
My humbled neck, and voices softly sound
As hand in hand with looks of loving trust
We roam that haunted ground.

The thatchy nest, the sheets from the shorn hedge
Well lavendered in the oak kist, give sleep,
Save when the ancient clock melodious, deep,
Chimes in the dawn and from the lattice ledge
Answers each feathered heap.

A DREAM RETURN

These rustlers in the ivy cheep and sing,
And wake me to the vacant golden light
And thin pure air, and in the dews of night
I wash all aches away, and from the spring
Bear water sunny bright.

The palmer's holy fount, the Mary well,
The ancient mask's clear fall, the nymph stream,
These are not dearer to the memoried dream
Than this poor hedge-side flow in the fern-dell
Of light and sunken beam.

I run to all: the hoary orchard-bourn,
The fallen beech adzed to a bridge, the brook,
The shallow silver plash, the deep brown nook,
Ambered with pebbles very thin and worn,
So cool for rod and book.

The doves are cooing on the barn's grey roof,
A peaceful sound for sitters in the sun
Of afternoons when half the work is done,
And bare and blue old Parlic holds aloof,
And curlews cry and run.

WANDERERS

AS I rose in the early dawn
The stars were fading white,
And on the slope of a green hill
I saw a camp-fire bright ;
The tent behind, the blaze before,
Three loggers in a row
Sang all together joyously
Pull up the stakes and go!

As I rode on by Eagle-Hawk,
The wide blue deep of air,
The wind among the glittering leaves,
The flowers so sweet and fair,
The thunder of the rude salt waves,
The creek's soft overflow,
All joined in chorus with the words —
Pull up the stakes and go!

Now by the white of forest tent,
The odour of the earth,
The sight and scent of morning smoke,
The evening camp-fire's mirth,
The deep-sea call and foaming green,
The new stars' gleam and glow
On the long trails of antique lands —
Pull up the stakes and go!

WANDERERS

The world is wide and we are young,
The sounding marches beat,
And passion pipes her sweetest call
From each dim lane and street ;
So rouse the chorus, brothers all,
We'll something have to show
When death comes round and strikes our tent —
Pull up the stakes and go!

THE RIBBLE

ROMAN Bellisama, what hunter soul,
Touched with the quiet eve, beside the roll,
The ripple of thy stream, thee Ribble named
In the far time? What warriors fierce and famed
Fought to and fro upon thy pebbly bed
Dyeing with valiant blood thy waters red,
And leaving their hid treasure for the hind
In after-age with wondering eyes to find,
Gloating upon the hoard! What lovers true
Have trysted in thy glens when skies were blue
And April young in flower! I have had moods,
During my wanderings in thy solitudes,
When I have seemed to hear the whispering tones
Of those who haunt thy valley, low sad moans
For ending, ardours passionate and wild
For peerless beauty, beauty undefiled.

So tired I, fain would I fall asleep
Upon thy sunshine bank, carrying the deep
Blue peace of thy birth-hills into my breast —
Rare with a sense of more than mortal rest —
Loving the symbols of that world so bleak,
The light austere, the lone hearth's circling reek,
The bleat of sheep, the peewit's shadowing wing,
Thy tinkling flow and murmur through the ling,
And by the wool-tagged gaps amid the thorns,
The thrilling of the larks on Sabbath morns
And all the sunny silence.

THE RIBBLE

Here grey stones
Carved with the Percies' arms, with piteous moans
Or prayer are built into the rough-hewn walls ;
There, thy pure crystal brown with waterfalls
And isles is beautiful. This limestone sheer
Takes the warm evening glow ere it grows sere
In tenderness. And I may brood and pore
On peel and keep and abbey grey and hoar,
On coin and altar, lancet, archivolt,
And spent ampullae from the green-leaved holt,
And on much human sorrow, pensive now
By Time's soft lapse — beneath the fledged bough.

Following thy course my longing eyes are wet,
Are dim with an intolerable regret —
Ah, when my death comes I shall be resigned,
But still unsatisfied if the south wind
Shall not have blown upon me by thy stream
Once more, but once ! blown from the hills of dream !

A LETTER FROM TASMANIA

(GEORGETOWN)

O SISTER dear! a snow-white magpie flew
This morn from the dewed grass to a pear
bough,
And at the goodly omen swift to you
My thoughts took wing — and they are with you
now.

What make we here beside the sounding main
In melancholy? Of a truth I pass
My life in Georgian stillness, and am fain,
Sweet, to recall when we were lad and lass.

I think of odd strange things: has Lune Street yet
Its sign of Grasshopper significant
To childish eyes of terror? Is there set
Still in old Friargate the Elephant?

That court so grimy in the silent light
Of Sunday morn, through which we loved to stray
To Trinity — do children clad in white
Still thread its dimness, meeting Quaker-grey?

Ah, I can touch you with a pleasing pain —
God knows with simple things! The winter glow
Of log and waxen lights, the ruddy stain
Of Christmas Eve upon the crunching snow!

A LETTER FROM TASMANIA

Does the Canal still slumber foul and dark
 Beneath the arched foundations, and the way
Of the old trams still wander to the Park?
 The chains clank in my heart! Is all decay?

Ah! as one dying on a foreign strand
 Sees through the open door his friends depart,
Sloped on the wave, and yearns for that dear land
 He shall not see again . . . so long's my heart!

THE CHANNEL

A TENDER brightening flame
Shines in the eastern woods, and o'er the vale
A star forgotten by the night is pale ;
And pure and gracious are the dew's grey tears
Waiting the solace of the morning spears
And colour without name.

Surely in time and space
The azure of eternity hath peeped,
For the great blue of air in heaven is steeped,
The clouds are whiter than the heart can white,
This inner sea is God's own thought of Light :
All show the eternal base.

LOVE

LOVE falters like a blushing child,
And timidly with downcast eyes,
And wonder at his bosom pain,
Offers his lips with sighs.

Love is a dreamer of the Rose,
Now waking from his dream to weep,
Now hiding in a world of bliss
Beyond the gates of sleep.

Love is a mighty man of war,
With lifted shield and thundering voice,
Who seizes with a reddened hand
The maiden of his choice.

Love is a mourner wounded sore,
• Freely he pours his heart's last flood,
And wears beneath the waning light
The crimson of his blood.

NIGHT

PALE thronging ghosts of old
With lingering look and weeping of farewell,
Haunt Memory's dews, and softly steal apart
To some forgotten fastness of the heart,
Waiting for those, their sweetness to unfold,
Born under Sorrow's spell.

This is not dumb desire,
Nor is it sorrow, but a longing vast,
A sleepless yearning for a perished face,
Regret unfathomed for her pure sweet grace,
For perfect dreams enfolded in the past,
Rising with night's spilt fire.

The pageants of the moon
Golden and red with autumn trouble me —
I have a thought that once, O long ago!
Unpeered I held thy name in battle's flow;
And cries the rapture of that time with thee
For meeting, soon, O soon!

TO LUCY

I WANT you, Sweet, you, only you!
So swells my heart's great cry,
For you do compass in yourself
All that for which I sigh;
O martyrdom of love divine,
For me there is no rest
Where you are not, my Love, my Joy,
My soul longs for your breast.

Give me to-day for after-hours
Of reverie and song,
A heart of glory in the gloom
When days are sad and long;
But, O my Love, give your sweet self
My treasure aye to be,
And there will be no day of gloom
Throughout eternity.

WEDDED

AERIES of lofty gums with rustling rinds
And noble sweep these lovers overspread
In a green halcyon wild whose gentle winds
Sing a Placebo for the quiet dead;
But they ride on with hope no more to part,
Hearing a song whose close leaves vacant heart.

They lean together laughing yet again
As with a snort their horses toss aside
Parting love's kissing lips without sweet gain;
And then they come unto a valley wide
And in an ooze of watchet air, see near
The spray surroyal of the trembling deer.

Ah, that rich vagamund whose sounding tomb
Were this wild land, with loving soul to burn
His body left, to store his ash with bloom,
No nuts of crystal, in a humble urn . . .
So with youth's care for gentle death they play
Nor fear the shadows of that mortal day.

And now with fire and horses tended he
Lies by her own command in peace most fair,
And smokes his calumet of joy while she
Moves beautiful enshrined in the eve air,
And in her heart there sings clear, delicate,
The Song of Songs, for she is love's true mate.

WEDDED

Now like a golden orb lost in the trees
The sun declines to dusk, and ruby flame
Burns on the stems : and with a whimper breeze
Up comes a spumy light that has no name,
And hunting echoes rise from the far bounds,
Amaritude of exile in the sounds.

Stand they in song like that which Eden sang,
With the strange newness of their union dumb,
Its awe and mystery, each with a pang
For the fleet maiden-moments that will come
In all their passionate wonder nevermore :
Then close they on themselves the forest door.

FRANKLIN SQUARE

ONCE upon a time I stood,
The Spring within me mounting,
Transfigured in that radiance,
The golden moments counting,
When down the path came my dear wife,
Her cheeks like bramble roses,
Her clear blue eyes the sweetness held
Where love for aye reposes.

Spring's living light irrelevant
Smiled on our happy meeting,
Floating from the vague elmy green,
Touching with dream our greeting;
And straight we went to Fairyland,
All earthly cares forgetting,
With sally as of fountain flood
In the pale light upjetting.

We went where death is never known,
Where life is one sweet Maying,
Where dreams come true in happy sheaves,
And elfin flutes are playing;
And from that green and fragrant land
We rapt for languid faring
A gleam to lie upon our days
When burdens we are bearing.

VIRGIL IN THE BUSH

NOW comes the very sweetest of the night,
The Poet's noon, and by the golden core
Of my oak log I savour Time's soft flight,
And steep my soul in fragrant Latin lore.

I am for Virgil — lo, the College lawn
By Thames his side, and the thick scented shade ;
There with the treasured volume and the dawn
I roam the Trojan shore with a dear Maid.

The wind fresh-blowing draws me to the deep,
From home and pleasant thresholds far I go ;
And learn the long farewell of those who weep
The casting of the earth, the pyre's last glow.

For her the fragile hemlock pipe I play
Wreathed with dark violets, or sing of streams
And hallowed fountains, and the idle day
That fades at length to stars and happy dreams.

With tiny waving masks I hang the pine
To Ceres great, where sweet the milky corn
Swells on the greener stem ; and carve the vine
On beechen cups and hyacinths forlorn.

O grave and sweet, of antique grief the flower,
Those words of purest sorrow : tears are shed
For sad misfortune ; mortal woes have power
To touch the heart ; give lilies for the dead.

VIRGIL IN THE BUSH

Our Italy is still upon the rim
Of all the world, though here a fuller gleam
And interwoven azure faint and dim,
And blushing rose, hint of Lavinian dream.

Ah, Love, the melancholy waters lave
The silent shore, but ere we stoop to drink
Of that indifference we call Lethe's wave,
Of Virgil's perfect line we'll smiling think.

A SABINE FARM

HORACE, the flying years glide by
And still we drain with thee
Amphorae of old Massic wine
 Beneath the myrtle tree ;
And by the source of sacred stream
 We hold pale Death in fee,
With Chloe of the laughing lips
 And rustic Phydile. . . .

Of late I kept a farm for love
 Of all thy tranquil days,
A sunny corner of the earth
 Beyond my fondest praise ;
I wreathed green myrtles round my brow
 And read thy ordered lines
On yellow leaves, as ivory pale,
 And drank thy classic wines.

I lived untroubled by the thought
 Of night and parting love,
Me neither Geryon's triple frame
 Nor Pelops' fate could move ;
And I remembered Plancus' year,
 The fire of love's sweet fool,
And called for chaplets and pure nard
 By a brown woodland pool.

A SABINE FARM

My she-goat loved the orchard leaves,
And plucked, chained to my wrist,
As underneath a violet sky
I lay in a flower mist;
But then a Cretan came to me
And talked of moth and pest,
And scorned the moss upon my trees,
Token of summer rest.

The beauty of the briar-rose,
The blackberry's pale flower,
The thistle's royal purple hue,
The gorse's golden hour,
The crimson creeper in the grass,
The rush's greening lane,
Were naught—my orchard was not clean,
We said farewell in pain.

Horace, I may not keep a farm,
Short is the span of life,
And kings and husbandmen must go
Where shadows hush the strife;
But though the Capitol is dust,
Pontiff and Virgin sleep,
Pure as a fountain in our hearts
Thy songs well from the deep.

TO OUR SON

O HUGH, our son, our little son!
We pray that God will keep
Your ways, and when this life is done
Give you His perfect sleep.

O Child, we love you unto pain,
We yearn to know your fate,
We long to arm you with our gain,
To bring you to the Gate.

Be pure, dear lad, be kind and true;
Fear naught, though one your side;
Be swift to give each man his due—
Let Jesus be your Guide.

Guard every thought, guard every deed,
These die not in the past,
The evil thought, the act, will breed
And mar your peace at last.

Keep in your soul a sacred place,
An altar of pure flame;
There seek, in Christ, the Father's face,
Calling upon His Name.

Remember, O remember, Hugh,
When we are gone to earth,
The love so beautiful and true
That follows thee from birth.

WAR

I HAVE no war-songs for these times.
No sword-chant fierce and bright,
I cannot pour my soul in rhymes
That rise not to its height.

But could I reach down words from heaven,
And dig them from the pit of hell,
And spoil them from the grave-rot's leaven . . .
Then I might sing it well.

AUSTRALIA

THOSE famous isles that stem Atlantic waves
On Europe's western coast, now Britain
hight,

Have noble peoples, pacts of warrior-blood,
Dreaming and passioned, stern and debonair ;
And these within the past, unknowing bounds,
On ocean rode and made its hoary wastes
Merc highways for their valour, and its deeps
A peaceful sepulchre. Their swarming broods
Now thinly hive in this huge continent
Australian ; and, not unlaurelled, hear
Voices that mutter of sad coming woe
When we shall be unfriended. Brother hearts,
Not of vain glory do I sing, nor joy
In lion ramp and streams of purple blood,
War's dreadful rubric, but I love this land,
My foster-mother, with a passioned love,
And fain would sound a lofty trumpet-peal
To rouse her people lapt in slothful ease
To noble pain of preparation 'gainst
The thunder-breath and break of foe more fell
Than Scythian Tamburlane.

A little while
And then the waiting grave—how shall we sleep
In shame or honour? O, we know at heart
This remnant valiant dust lit by the Star
Of Liberty will do forlorn high deeds,

AUSTRALIA

Each man death's whirlpool in the trampling throng,
And die untamed, unbound, with nostrils cut
In haught defiance. But O take the time,
And lift on eagle wing of fellowship
Of proudest hopes and truth heroical,
And love in act, nor let our heritage
Lapse to a gulf unfounded.

THE DRUM

THE Lord looked down from heaven upon the
earth
And saw red War in throes of evil birth,
Springing to burn and sully His fair world
With sword imbrued and bloody flag unfurled;
And through the air there rolled His sudden drum,
Heart-beats of men, sounding the high call—
“Come.”

And Serbia replied:
“Give me, though small, a place upon Thy side;
I cannot traitor be
Unto the principle of liberty
That Thou hast planted in the human breast;
And in Thy cause I will not spare my best:
I hear the muttering of Thy dreadful drum.
I come.”

And Russia answered with a myriad shout:
“We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast called us out
To fight upon Thy quarrel, for Thou art
The guidance and the worship of our heart;
And we through Thee love with a humble mirth
The dewy perfume of our holy earth,
The rapture of blue distance and faint smoke,
The joys and tears so poor of lowly folk—
The Russias answer to Thy yearning drum,
We come.”

THE DRUM

And France, so debonair and delicate,
Heard in the echoing roll the call of fate,
And pale and stern as sweet Antigone
Left all her cherished labours to be free—
Colour and graving tool, or pen, or plough;
Resolved no more to tyranny to bow;
And so she spake unto the urging drum,
“I come.”

Awhile, and Belgium said: “Take Thou my heart,
For Thou alone, O Lord, art now my part,
My only portion: children, wife and home,
Land, ancientry, bereft of all I roam;
I hear the whisper of Thy muted drum.
I come.”

And Britain rose majestic from her flood:
“Much have I here to make life sweet and good,
Orchard and meadow deep in sunshine gleam,
Or dim with veiling blossom, faint with dream,
A gracious past of pure immortal song,
Glory and love my peaceful haunts among;
But not for these will I stand out of this,
Or rather for these I will win great bliss
And fame for high heroic duty done,
Mine still when I have passed, to legend gone:
So, Lord, in this fierce surge take me and mine,
Isles, continents, dominions, all are Thine—
We hear the thunder of Thy mighty drum,
We come.”

THE DRUM

Italia, by all her sons adored,
Caught up her shadowy helm, her Roman sword,
And lifting her great shield rushed on the foe,
No longer brooding with Virgilian woe
Upon the fates of men, but stern with high
Resolve at Freedom's call to live or die
In fate superb! The Latin trumpets roll
Imperial melancholy through her soul
Steel-tempered, and like hurried bugles blown
In some last soldier-agony, the moan
And stir of her great thoughts echo the drum
And from her flaming leaps the word: "I come."

Japan, the golden light of other years
Upon her Past heroical, the tears
Of martyred Belgium saw streaming fall,
And left the silent air, the springtime's call
Of white and holy bloom, the sacred dream
Of Fujisan, her delicate supreme
Symbols of Art, and to the pulsing drum,
Samurai all, cried in her song: "I come."

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America, beyond the western main
With eagle-eyes watched Europe's battle plain
And barriers of death. Erect she stood,
Her garments deep with perfumes of the wood,
The prairie and the mount; and on her broke
From 'neath a splendour of red rolling smoke.

THE DRUM

The cries of freemen struggling for the right,
Couching old chivalries ; and the murk night
She cleft with her bright steel, hearing the drum
And answering from great loyalties : "I come."

And other peoples pregnant with the thought
Of sacrifice for an Ideal, wrought
Imperishably in the appealing cause
Of anguished Peace and her benignant laws,
Dreaming no beauty in the laurelled page,
The drear defilings of the obscene rage
Of trampling War, the odour of the breath
Of dim corruption rising from the death
Of the young men, the purple of their blood
Spilt on the altar-ground, the silent flood
Of tears impassioned, and the needlessness
Of this hushed Calvary ; though fain to bless
The fathomless devotion that can raise
The human spirit over hell-born days
Unto immortal heights—the Peoples heard
Long thunderings, and by pure Freedom stirred,
Enfranchized, cried unto the muffled drum :
"O not for Glory but for Right we come !"

MISSING

FAR in the green haunts of the past
Of old the knights went faring,
But your great memory shall outlast
The fame of their fierce daring.

As through the wasted land you trod
You cheered the broken-hearted,
The sufferer fallen on the sod,
All who had loved and parted.

Ah, when the sharp peace came were you
Dreaming of your grey alley,
Or of the trembling of the dew
In some lone bushland valley?

Only the winds mourned for your years
In death so hot and hurried,
Only the raindrops were the tears
Upon your face unburied.

As you have died to make men free
Without a thought of glory,
The touch of martyrdom shall be
The seal of your high story.

RHEIMS

THIS beauteous relic of an ancient world,
This stately Rheims, this sacred house of God,
That sang in accents of a nobler day
The lofty dreams of master-spirits, now
Is whelmed in fiery hail.

No more the light
Shall play upon its lavish bloom of stone
With gift of wings unto its soaring, or
On its great angels and the holy ones
Met in a mystic measure; ah, no more
Shall a religious peace brood gently here
In a sweet hush as of a festival
Kept in a still and solemn ecstasy,
The evocation of an exquisite,
Remote, sad tenderness.

O thus to burn
This cradle of the memories of France—
Quintessence of her past; this pageantry
Of sculptured stone and bronze and rainbow-hues,
That set the crowning act of the sweet Maid!

St. Jeanne, St. Jeanne! ah, when the mounting flames
Began their cruel work, what visions rose
Above thine agony? Domremy's vale
And winding river with its gentle lapse
So wondrous cool, the flowering days of spring,
The dance and garlands round the Fairies' Tree,
And that midsummer in the garden shade

RHEIMS

When spake thy voices ; or the vision rare
Of Michael and the Virgins crowned and bright
With heavenly glory ; or the gallant charge
Beneath thy liliated banner, Orleans,
Patay, and Troyes, and the anointing day
In this then-ancient Rheims of that ingrate
And foul blood royal? Banner, sword and cloak,
And golden tabard shining like the sun,
And glittering armour, and thy crowds of friends,
Fell from thee doomed : only our Lord was there,
His Name was on thy fevered lips, His Cross
Before thy fainting eyes.

Thou art with God !

Thou, if misfortune can find place in Heaven,
Must weep the fallen in thy dreamed-of France,
And love thy ancient foes. Our chivalry
Fight now upon the faction of thy France
As erst they fought in noblest fellowship
With Harry on St. Crispin's sounding day ;
And deep have dewed with blood the liliated land,
Calling their sons and allies from the high
Dominions, feudatories, and the isles,
Rejoicing in a lofty surge to smite
And burn to points of steel and thundering death.

And we have given to thee a sister dear,
Edith Cavell, who pale, with blinded eyes,
But high in soul, in her Gethsemane
Died by a murderer's hand—Edith and Jeanne !
The lily and the rose entwined for aye.

FORGOTTEN?

THE white sun-fire of morn divinely bright,
The misty gold of noon in a deep glade,
The beauty of the dew on the green blade
Or in the cups of flowers, the dark blue night
Lit by the crescent moon, thin, silvery, sweet,
All these are ours while you are scattered far,
Dead to the sun, the moon, the lighting star,
And all the loveliness youth loves to greet.

Unmourned and unlamented shall you lie,
Forsaken in lone death, while we rejoice
Forgetful of you — you who rose to die,
A flame of valour, now one with the sod?
If we forget, hear in your rest our voice,
May we lie out, far from the grace of God!

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

A BEAUTIFUL and tender note
Sound for the souls who dying fought
For Freedom's cause. O let it float
 In grave sweet chording ;
Then rise in an impassioned surge
Most terrible, a mighty dirge,
Not without hope, the clarions urge,
 The drums and swording.

We stand upon the threshold now,
Immortal pinions fan the brow,
New wonders wait upon the vow
 To die aspiring ;
No languors, doubts, can forge the key
Of Life but the soul's energy
Opening upon eternity,
 The beacons firing.

O God, let in a surging flood,
A streaming of the holy blood
That flowed so freely on the rood,
 And make us wholly
Unquiet till we right the wrong,
Scornful of faint and hopeless song,
Nor dallying the shades among
 Of melancholy.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

With golden juice of heavenly wine
Drunk, we will do a deed divine,
And uncreate the world by line
 Of inward dreaming ;
And we will build anew with souls,
By right, and not of pity's doles,
Of beauty that eternal rolls
 From God's pure beaming.

WINGS OF DESIRE

AH, Icarus! Ah, hapless flying-man!
Air-winnower of the van!
Thy father thought to breathe into the gold
Of his Chalcidian gate
The picture of thy fate,
The eddying fall that ended thy brief span;
But at the piteous mould
Twice his worn features paled,
His faltering hands twice failed

We, happier, can mount the air and soar,
War-torments o'er:
The thunder-clap, the blinding flash and roar,
The stench and gore;
But not the sweet accord,
But not the love we hoard—
And in the placid sunshine find release,
And a great peace.

Rise we to cloud-mounts with a mighty sweep
And view the Austral land,
This grey-green band
Of streaming wind-blown trees,
This island-continent of harmonies
Subtler than all imaginings and deep
With shimmering gold—
What joy untold

WINGS OF DESIRE

To brood upon the visions of this land!
The drifting sheep, the camp-fire's dying brand,
The waving sea of wheat golden and tall,
The little farms each in its forest-wall,
The joys that pass beyond what memory sums
Beneath the shadow of the mighty gums.

And as we poise on wing
Abysses sing
Of infinite adventure — Sirius,
Arcturus, call from the calm fields of space,
And Uranus,
To roam with keen hawk face
The ancient silver seas,
To roam the Pleiades.

Ah, God! to mount on some bright dawn and find,
O joy incredible! that old sun lane
Where Enoch walked with Thee,
Where on the fiery chariots of the wind
Elijah smote athwart heaven's foamy sea,
O bliss untold! to find that road again,
And borne up on strong pinions glimpse the walls
Bastioned in glory, and the beauteous halls
Where Jesus reigns, and leads by the calm stream
His Saints, blood-won from earth's unquiet dream.

WINGS OF DESIRE

My soul, the wings that stir thy purged realm
With premonitions of infinity,
With quintessential joy of poesy,
With shuddering thrills that whelm
Thee, in a surging sea
Of love imperishable, rush
Of storming passion, throes imperial,
Sharp-sweet, are an eternal care-less call
To rise, an Icarus, in the great hush—
One who shall never fall!

O Icarus, a line of Virgil keeps
Thy memory green with those who climb the
 steeps
Of heaven on upright wing;
And dreaming on thy prelude flight I sing,
Dear Bird, of all the future infinite
Amid air-solitude pure and sun-bright.

We shall bring life from death,
And with unconquerable breath
Make of the wonder and the glorying light
New Will unto the final raptured height.

MY SONG UNSUNG

WITHOUT the pale of time and place
I sang one night with raptured face
Of things of beauty and of light
Culled from the ages lost in night,
Touched with a grace of delicate
Pleading — so frail! — against their fate
To lie in waste; and then my song
Mourned for earth's pilgrims suffering wrong:
How one desired with urgent breath
The child that brought upon her death —
Poor struggler 'gainst the breast of Him,
The awe-ful shade who makes more dim
The veils of night; and of the man
In anguish for her narrow span
Holding her close, printing a book
Upon his heart with fixed look
But here my song grew to a beat
So piercing, melancholy sweet,
That Time sat grieving at my psalms,
His skull sunk in his bony palms,
His scythe sparing a rose as red
As ever bloomed for a bride's bed,
Beyond her date; and Death drew nigh,
Lifting his funeral torch on high
Above my scroll — O hidden face,
Cowl-darkened! O the marble grace
Of those straight folds! A morning beam,
Grief unexpired, broke on my dream,
And Death and Time rose to depart,
To work their will upon man's heart.

IS LIFE WORTH WHILE?

IT is worth while
To have been a small child within the house,
And to have known its beauty and its love,
Its tranquil summer eves lit by one star,
The winter-darkened streets and ruddy hearths,
And all the passioned wonder.

It is worth while
To have been young, and to have walked the road
In straight-limbed grace, and to have earned the
cheer
Marking some victory on the well-fought field ;
And to have known the studious hum within
High litten walls as closing-time drew near,
And dreaming heard the teacher nobly fired
Emblem the Latin spirit 'neath the spell
Of the regretful sallowing of the light.

It is worth while
To roam romantic highways and behold
The sun in his bright strength glorying along
The forest roofs, turning their green to gold—
Leaves multitudinous ; savouring the air
Yellow and full of light as some great wine ;
Viewing the ships awash and swilled with floods,
And the black jetty-posts with rippling gleam :

IS LIFE WORTH WHILE?

And, touched with April youth, to cry aloud:
"O there is none—O, there is none but you!"
Dreaming of kisses, joys unutterable,
And days that are no more.

It is worth while
To read in books of human tenderness,
Legends heroical, great memories,
And to commune with the high hearts of men,
Blood-royal of the race, to place the crown,
The clear and laurel crown upon their heads
In our lone attics, solemn and austere,
In faltered worship.

It is worth while
To love man's spirit striving to express
The faultless beauty of his dream in line
Or happy colour; or in the winged flights,
The pleading minor and the trampling flow,
Melodious thunder, of the circling spheres
Singing within his breast.

It is worth while
To have in struggle felt a stream of power
Rising from perfect images of rest,
Of health and great achievement, clear and bright
Within, and an indrawing of a strength
Aidant, without, resulting in a life

IS LIFE WORTH WHILE?

Of manly quiet and stern probity
And piety and truth ; and to have given
Self in a perfect sacrifice to love,
And to have made a way through this armed world
For following wife and child.

It is worth while
To touch essential pain, enduring woe ;
To hold the Psyche under rule ; to feel
If more tears fell they would be tears of blood ;
To enter in the lives of those around
By sympathy, and bearing with them work
For brotherhood — ay, it is worth the while
Even to — fall, if nobly, beaten down,
Sad but unconquered.

It is worth while,
The slanting sun-gold fading from the ferns,
The amber, crimson leaves slow-circling down,
Reft of their summer glory but endued
With strange magnificence, and earth and sky
Tenderly grey, to know a perfect hour
Of ripened tranquil leisure, and of hints,
Enchantments magical — ah, in those courts
Of greening gloom to place the hurried soul
Beyond all hurt, by contemplation deep
In the pure sun of the Ideal's dream.

IS LIFE WORTH WHILE?

It is worth while
To live the beauty of old wistful things
Renewing ancient hours: in the half-light
To view those darkling forms vested with Spring,
Her immaturity, frail, exquisite;
Or worn and wasted as an ashen moon
Faint with all longing in a foamy stream
Of squandered high-embattled stars insnared;
Yea, in the cadence of our age's eve
In pensive retrospect that swells the heart
To bid farewell forever to the friends,
(Spending the night in talk of friends long gone),
The books, the happy places, of our day,
The vanished and the vanishing . . . O pain
Solaced by that farewell!

It is worth while
To wander in the bushland solitudes,
And by the wood-fire watch the spiralling
Of the blue smoke, and taste the very tang,
While round the tender azure distances
Merge in the thickening stems; and there to pore
Upon the secret of the Universe,
Regarding the enclosing loveliness
As something visible to tune the thoughts
Invisible to that prelude peace
Through which we climb the ladder mystical
Unto the final union with God.

IS LIFE WORTH WHILE?

It is worth while
To look upon the face of brother Death
With steadfast eyes, to make unflinching search
In those dark hollows for the mystery
That waits his gesture, and the still repose
Of our eternal rest.

MANSOUL

O SOUL of Man! what coasts lie in thy realm,
Far, delicate, and as pure crystal clear—
Remembrances of what thou holdest dear—
Ethereal! Though envious time doth whelm
 With all-consuming fear
Thrones and their chroniclers, these bide in light
 Of faerie, born of the joy of youth,
 Whose evanescence stirs a tender ruth
That keeps for us, untouched by sullen night,
 Their wonder and their truth.

O Soul of Man! thou hast a power divine
 To penetrate the mournful souls of things,
 Sad in their dumbness, and on thy swift wings,
With swellings at the heart of golden wine
 From Heliconian springs,
To place their beings in thy inner fold,
 Where by their beauty they enlarge thy life,
 And give thee freedom in the midst of strife,
Way from the clamour and the mortal cold,
 And care keen as a knife.

There spread the forest-roofs, the broad green
 glades,
 The murmuring waters circle islet-stones,
 Swaying the sedges with cool whispering tones,
The moving mirrors of dew-laden blades
 And leaves and rough fir-cones ;

MANSOUL

And there are amber noons and magic eves,
And grassy moorlands quivering in the breeze,
And crescent moons over warm homeland leas,
And round the moon, the stars, thy spirit weaves
A net with sighing ease.

There thy great portals ope in nameless hue
Upon the ocean: there in glories white,
And suns innumerable of golden light,
Morn ever breaks through pure and thrilling blue—
Yea, on a splendour bright
That trembles into diamonds all the field
Of nobly swelling billows to the far
Recess of violet shadow, and the bar
Of the horizon. Ah, the soul is healed
Where such blown reaches are.

Writhing, the seas run mountainous and strong,
Caverned and tumbling in a thundering roll,
Blood-red as with a light of burning coal,
Giving their battle and their roaring song
Unto the human soul;
And now the trumpeting of doom are stilled
In the large peace of evening's yellow glow,
As if no wind again could ever blow,
And in that graver radiance, mystery-filled,
We other Breathings know. . .

MANSOUL

Thou hast an alchemy to image there
All shapes of regal melancholy, sweet
Old fablings of the verge that makes thee beat
In perilous sympathy; feignings that dare
 To a heroic heat;
And men and women set grim Death at naught
 Again upon thy stage, willing to die
 In joy ineffable, without a sigh
For summer days, because young April brought
 Lips for a moment nigh.

O love that brings new wonder to the world,
 That lights the ages with a starry gleam,
 The light of eyes long dead, still seen in dream,
Stars that drew love though Death his banner furled
 And quenched his torch's beam;
How shall we sing of those whose awe-full power
 Can all illumine in a sun-like blaze,
 Lifting the soul on high in garnered days;
Or darken with a sigh the earth in flower,
 Withering the lover's bays!

And there are nights beside the winter fire,
 Ethereal dusk and glow, where thou, O Soul,
 Art satisfied as from the heavenly bowl,
And canst through death see with a hushed desire
 The meditated goal;

MANSOUL

And wandering on we build of delicate
Imaginations that are musical
With joy of their creation, festival
And love, or on the ghostly notes of fate
Pause as they lingering fall.

Ah, what a world lies in thy mystic ring!
Yea, fallen spirits through thy dungeon-light
Grove in the dread decay, mourning the flight
Of the white cloud, of the first gold of spring
So sudden, pure and bright!
And lifted lips of mortal cold chill thine
In pale farewell, and on the distant verge
Lovers with passioned arms and crying surge,
Havened no more in beauty, wet with brine,
Their claims to memory urge.

Yea, soul of man! vague shadows lurk and wait
Within thy purlieus; rare thy happy hours;
Cankered thy blossomings, thou hast no flowers
Of perfect bloom; uncertain is thy fate;
The tempest ever lours;
And thou hast open wounds from old-time shames,
Grievous and foul betrayals, very hells
Of poignant memories, sweet friendships' knells,
Follies and ignorances, haunting blames,
For penitential cells.

MANSOUL

And, Mansoul, thou art parched with a fierce
drought

For something that the world can never stream
To satisfaction, some delight, some dream
Upon the prison wall, beauty about,
Beyond conception's beam:
Yet hast thou high immortal joy and song,
For thou canst love, thou hast a treasure-store
Of dear remembrance for the silent shore,
And Christ will purge thy sin, thy anguished wrong,
And by His blood restore.

Accept thy share of suffering, centre life,
Drain its great flagon; God's will be thy peace,
From thy high post of trust seek no release,
But bear thee bravely in the mortal strife—
Thy faith and love increase;
And, darkened though thou be, flame on thy part
And, though against the peerage of the foe,
Lose not thy harmony for any blow,
But fly and sing within thy glorious heart,
And unimpeded flow.

O, tremulous, close not thy guarded pale,
But give to each forlorn a pure sweet birth
And an environment that has no dearth
Of goodness, truth and beauty . . . if he fail
With a celestial mirth

MANSOUL

Ensphere him and inspire that he may go
From failure to fresh life, for ever on,
Having eternity when time is done,
So facing God and Nature he may know
What goal to brood upon.

Thou art a flame that goes beyond the stars
Seeking a kindred fire, a burning soul
Unmoved amid the immemorial roll
And change of things; there, breaking all thy bars,
Thou art rapt in the whole;
And from these white communions of pure bliss,
Though shadows close again, thou hast a choir
Of melodies from an eternal lyre;
And, reassured by Christ's redeeming kiss,
Thou canst for aye aspire.

Ah, God! the finite cannot comprehend
The infinite, but this we know Thou art
A person, for Thou speakest to the heart,
Implying kindred, and to Thee we bend
Praying Thee to impart
Thy beauty to our souls . . . O let us be
Austere and solemn as a mountain-height
Against an evening sky clear-washed with light
Golden! Father, thy children wait on Thee.

PASSING

SACRED bell at eventide,
Calling, calling, far and wide,
Ah, so sweet and low !
Sweet and sad as autumn light,
Low and sweet as closing night, . . .
Pilgrim, let us go.

Youth and beauty far away
Lean together in the may,
Shining head to head ;
But for us the solemn peace,
(Do not sigh) and great release
Of the happy dead.

Come, as children, steal to Him
Who through all the ages dim
Offers calm relief :
Stricken heart, so fierce and wild,
Come, as comes a little child,
With thy wasting grief.

Far above the creeds He stands
With His pierced and pitying hands
Stretched to thee and me ;
He is Love's last tender bed,
Bosom for the weary head
To eternity.

SLEEP

SLEEP comes at last, O hasten then, my Soul,
And with thy songs of pure immortal birth
Harmoniously build up a peak of joy
For our bright tabernacles. Ah, but God
Is sweet and merciful, for when the song
Is finished and forgotten, and the brush
Is laid aside, and when the pliant hands
No more by grave and lovely sounds can move
With tender evocations, there remains
Deep sleep, the darkened earth's quiet repose.

THE SYMBOL

THUS pass the glories of the world!
He lies beneath the pall's white folds :
His sword is sheathed, his pennon furled,
Him silence holds.

The pilgrim staff, the cockle-shell,
The crown, the sceptre of his pride,
The simple flower from forest dell,
Heap at his side.

And add thereto the wild-heart lute,
The voice of love and twilight song ;
Those passioned strings though he is mute
Remember long.

And move not thence his evening book
The sifted gains of calm and storm ;
And bow before that dust-strewn nook
And silent form.

To-morrow hath no hope for him,
No clasp of friend, no grip of foe :
Remember, love, with eyes tear-dim,
We too must go.

PRISONERS OF HOPE

I KNOW through my lament for Spirit dearth,
Through weary thought by which my life
grows dim
For cruel warfare dark, unholy, grim,
Transcendent God becomes within our earth ;
And so I chant my hymn.

Though quick the Universe we shall not see
Perfection in becoming, but there goes
The flow of God involved, uniting foes,
Evolving, O beyond! in wisdom free,
To an immortal close.

Rooted in plasmic foam and primal mire,
We are His children, eager for the Light,
For the response, the God divine in sight,
And lifting by His power we still aspire,
Lit from His altar bright.

Aged yet fresh as April is the trust,
The soma's guest, the germ of latencies
Of beauty, love and joy ; and we the keys
Hold for our sinking or our spring from dust—
O guard those delices !

Transmute the essence into varied life,
Act for the whole ; and as a little Child
Offer thy will upon His Altar mild,
And thou shalt find thy will purged from all strife
Is God's will undefiled.

SYMBOLS INADEQUATE

WITH soaring wings the Soul of Poesy
Urges her flight above the nighted earth
And the dim-shadowing clouds unto the stars
With surge illimited; and in her course
She summons towers of conflagrations vast,
Advancing there her potent but to find
No vesture for the throes magnificent
That shake her in the presence of the power,
The victories amplitudinous of God.

With golden puissance and whelming might
She rushes on the heart born to receive,
Engulphing it in glory, turmoil, storm,
And kindling it to sing eternal themes
In noble roomage, but again she lacks
The signs pontifical. Thus Poesy
Yearns to express her amaranthine songs,
But in her symbols purged though they be
She can but handle cerements that pale
And dull her shining, and make dumb her voice,
And hence her martyrdom. But could she mint
A language equal to the melody
That thrills her spirit, that could form and clothe
The pity for the sorrow of the grave,
The joy and anguish of the lover, then
The unhoped dreams, the halcyon harbingers,
The strangeness and the wonder of her lips,
Fragrance incapturable, Paradise,
Would be our heritage.

LIGHT

LIGHT, O I cherish: light of common day;
And those elusive gleams that shyly play
With sweet remembrance, such as dewy wet
With azure lit the breathing violet
Of Perdita; the placid yellow beam
Gilding the Narrow Glen of the sad stream;
The jaded gold that haunts each quiet wynd
Of old deserted cities dim, resigned;
The long slant of the quivering moted ray;
The autumn calm that broods upon decay;
The strange light on the ceil that tells of snow;
The chilly evening's hearth of rich red glow
That drives the shadows up the dusky wall;
The fanlight's tracery on the gloomy hall;
The lanthorn's moving spots athwart the pane;
The rising moon flooding the watery plain. . .
All these are premonitions faint or lost,
Of the awaiting heavenly Pentecost.

MY SILENT KINGDOM

SURELY before the gleaming of the Dove
Eternal fell upon the elder place
Of floods, beyond our fleeting time and space
My kingdom is ; and there in silent love
I walk with quiet face.

There nothing loud may enter, and the lands
Are hushed beneath a grave and mellow light,
And winds blow soft, forgetful of their might,
Voiceful of rest ; and calm the hourly sands
Lapse from the leisured height.

Faint, wistful, few, the offerings there have braved
The chancings of the heart ; there leaves unfold
By bronze and marble haughty, pure and cold,
With perfect words of human wisdom graved
In melancholy gold.

ANCIENT WISDOM

OFt have I sat within the quiet shrine
Of those old masters of autumnal calm,
To win the very spirit of their psalm
Of triumph, and to reign with them divine,
Crowned with undying palm.

Nobly they speak : if thou wouldst be at rest
And bathe in stillness, losing life's sick fear,
Uneager, wise, thy soul a golden sphere,
Have no opinion, let thy well-loved best
Depart without a tear.

For recollection, life with being fill ;
And like the ripened olive let thy deeds
Fall in a sunlit leisure for man's needs ;
And move in silence by a perfect will ;
And seek immortal meeds.

THE OLD MEN'S SONG

WE will renew our youth, no more forlorn,
And sing the blood-song of the starry spring,
The vaporous golden-white of early morn,
The breathing bud, the light and soaring wing,
Forgetting all the heart-break and the quest,
The numbered hours so few,
And the last vanquishing and quiet rest
Beneath the solemn yew.

Not unto us return inviolate
The springtime miracle of hawthorn bloom,
The thrill at some divine and passioned fate
Growing with mystic meaning in Time's womb;
But the long leisures of our vernal dreams
Are dimmed, yet riched with tears,
Quintessence of old tenderness that streams
From the far poignant years.

Not unto us to feel again the sweep
As of a falcon o'er the mountain-crest,
The hopes uncalculated, terror deep
Of lonely hours, the fearless love confest,
The perfume as of some ethereal May,
The laughter delicate,
Delicious, and the golden-ended day
That came, O late, so late!

THE OLD MEN'S SONG

As lovers gaze who know they part for aye,
Looking across a bridgeless gulf at eyes
That light the world, yearning for love's sweet play,
So with deep thirst unquenchable and sighs
We long for vanished faces, other lands,
Lamenting our year's fall,
Yet trusting that a touch of gentle hands
Will lead us through Death's hall.

O here upon life's lonely twilight verge
We lie, so old, with eyes fulfilled of dream,
Nor can we turn our song into a dirge,
For in the soul there shines a golden beam;
And love is stronger than the yawning grave,
O vehement and strong!
And from the wrecks of living we can save
Courage and hope for song.

DELIVERANCE

A MONG the mighty eucalypts he stood
Fraught with the beauty of the solemn bush—
The glades of sunny green fading to blue,
The age-worn boles and roofs of drooping leaves,
The winds deep with wet fragrance of the dew
From hollow places, and the threading streams
Among the grasses and the pebbled earth—
Loitering in ripened leisure. To the east
The ocean trembled with innumerable gleams,
And emulous the barges' full-spread sails
Whitened the dreaming foam. The mountain loomed
Down in the west, blown with a fume of smoke
Of ancient forests. Slenderly a song,
O frail and lonely! of the rain-bird's pipe
Sighed through the crystal silence, loosening
A very legion of light-winged desires
And murmurings within his bosom's realm;
And all this flourish of bewildering bloom
He peopled with old valour and disdain,
Troubling, unsullied, unreturning fames,
And legends leafing into laurel green
And fabled beauty—he with a slain pang
Of surging love kissed on the scarlet mouth
The rose of all the world, of his true world,
The lips of his beloved.

Idling he lodged
Insnares, enchained, until the sundering night
Cooled the red smoulder to an ashen fleece
Above a fiery ember . . . O then came

DELIVERANCE

Unto the dreamer cital of old woes
And forlorn burdens; and he strove with pain
To cleave the filmy veils that ever grow
Before the Real. Yea, he yearned to see
Himself in all sincerity: his pride
And thralldom to outworn beliefs whose bands,
Swathing his unexpanded soul, were deep
Empurpled with his agony, for they
Transmuted—so it seemed—were one
With his soul's essence.

(Ah, there is a door.

Into the realms below the conscious mind
Where floods the universal: could we pass
Its portal we could gather all again
The power and calm of nature, and could go
Into the heart of God. Jesus, our Lord,
By virtue of His ambassage divine
Moved freely in that region.)

A rough crest
Brought him again within the sunset's breath
And golden splendour, and he cried, ensphered
In glory Time could not imbrown: "Forgive,
O God, my maimed and faltering soul! Destroy
My kingdomed folly; give an angelage
Before the end, of open-eyed belief
And strong denials, guarded, unenslaved,
Star-crowned."

And thus he stood imploring God
For sight, delaying not the thunder-stroke,
The trumpet-tongue, so that the soul might gain
Deliverance and expansion to her norm.

MEDITATION

1.

O MELANCHOLY tender human heart,
Grieving for battles lost, taking the part
Of ancient hopes forlorn—see how they go,
Earth's multitudes, some creeping on with woe,
Some riding helmed with flash and flame of grace,
Some dewed with Unction of the Holy Place,
And yet all bending to a wormy bound,
A little hole within the dusty ground.

2.

O still look out! May not that candour be
The opening of a door upon the sea
That floods in golden waves before the light
Of the great Adoration on the height;
Those flakes so softly beating gloom forlorn,
Prints of His feet Who left Gethsemane
For a triumphal morn?

3.

That Eastern hill was dark and sad below,
And dark above, but with a little glow
Over the rooting of the bitter tree
Where bowed a mourning group on bended knee,
While through the veiling gloom gold helmets dim
Marked where the Legions of the Cherubim
In wondering sorrow gazed—that little Light
Is now a dawn invading earth's long night
With purity unorb'd.

MEDITATION

4.

O light and sweetness of the Easter morn!
The Cup of Blessing and the Bread new-born;
The song, the victor-song, chanted above
The darkness of the grave! The moist earth's love
Lives yearningly in her green buds and flowers,
Scenting the grass, the waters, and the bowers,
And to our dream, the vaulted azure sky,
And the soul's highway to the bliss on high.

5.

My vineyard and my grapes are honey-sweet,
And He, my Lord, with peaceful, beauteous feet
Walks round my tower and vat and quaffs a cup,
Recalling that glad time when He went up
To send the Paraclete.

NO OTHER WAY

WHEN breaking buds were cups of light
And breathed their perfumes in sweet airs,
And crystal-clear the murmuring fall
Whispered the heart to leave its cares,
Then fine-spun gold was all my thought;
Of you I dreamed unto the verge
Of tears, and child-earth songs I heard,
And far was an autumnal dirge.

The soft and silent shadows slept
Upon the mountains, and the sea
Was blue as sapphire fabulous,
And through me swept eternity,
While from an open pane in heaven
Pure glories slanted on my earth,
Soft as the sheen of a rich cope,
And filled with orient light at birth.

From some hid furnace of God's love
Raptured assumptions rose and fell;
Ennobled pallors of grave peace
In plenitude composed my cell;
And so with forlay of the Spring,
Insurgent flights of lyric cry,
And regnant heart I took my staff,
No vading mortal colour nigh.

NO OTHER WAY

Ah, but at evening in the doubtful light
I came upon a river dark as night
Filling the valley with a murmuring flow
Neglectful, and I knew my way must go
Through that unfathomed flood whose only gleam
Crested the rolling waves with a pale beam,
And in my heart there swelled a mortal pain
Half given to sorrow, half to sweetest rain
Of farewell tears. . .

Then I remembered me
Of a fair promise of felicity
Whispered of old by my companion dear,
Jesus, my way-friend, and I put off fear
And waded in the shallows of the brim
And ashen grew my life but, through the dim
Dark vapours, over lowlands waste and chill,
There loomed in shining on a vernal hill
A City of Delight, new, fresh, unworn;
And so I deeper went, sustained, up-borne
By my Redeemer.

EARTH AND THE SOUL

The Earth speaks:

EARTH of my earth, child of my ample breast,
Being in whom my life burns to a flame,
Sum of my glory, leave, ah, leave me not:
See, I have pleasures for thy dreaming on,
O not-ignoble realms!
Magic of air and dewy solitudes,
River and ocean wave,
And earthly love so passionate and strong,
My ancient voice heard in green loneliness
Whispering old legends of my primal times,
Touching the spirit to adventures high—
And soft, unmemoried sleep in my dear arms.

The answering Soul:

Mother, I love thee so,—
Ah, leaves and perfumes of the forest-ways,
Ah, love profound and passionate and sweet,
Ah, melancholy infinite, beyond
Imagination!—but from the abyss,
From the eternal silence, comes a call
And I must go,
Unmindful of farewells,
Lone as the moon upon her pilgrimage
Unto a visioned goal,
Until I reach the uplands calm of God.

ON THE HILL-TOP

MOUNTING the hill I felt my burden go,
My burden of dim sorrow and vague fear,
With the ascension, and a joyful peace
Reigned in my bosom as the glorious vale
I viewed unhindered. Blue the Channel lay,
The outlines of its winding shores and isles
Most delicate and clear; and its great flow
Seemed calling to the opening majesty
Of some high Capital. The farther hills
Faintly empurpled rose in tender folds,
Touching the white-plumed clouds. Turning I saw
Beyond the Neck, the ocean's shimmering plane
Aidant of mystic longing. At my feet
The eucalypts sprang from a darkened mist,
Slashed on their roots with sunbeams, while above
The boles were half in glow and half in shade;
And the hushed air that brimmed the valley deep
Was yellow with a fume of golden light
Autumnal sweet and placid, reconciled.

CREDO

FAR in the past, the dread abysmal past,
After the cooling of the pits of fire,
The molten chasms and whirlpools of blown swale,
Pregnant became the earth with Life, the gift
Proceeding from some Power beyond her bound
Yet immanent in her and in her guest.

Piercing concurring elements this pledge,
Moulding the gnarly matter, organized
A million evolutions, leaguering
With thrusting courage and intelligence
Until from the amoeba, pilgrim Man
Stood on the earth, care-wounded but still glad.

O measureless the march from opening Life
Up to the beauty of an Imogen,
The grandeur of a Lear, the mind sublime
Of island Prospero! Came Man by chance,
Or accident, or by directed growth?
O measureless the folly that believes
He rose to his estate by accident
Or wayward chance, or that Almighty God
Created in us thirst and hunger sore
For immortality but to deceive—
A sorry jesting! Look upon the stars
And keep still silence. Growth, creative growth,
Directed by the Giver of all Life—
His self-expression—is the quested Word
Explaining Man: he is the son of God.

CREDO

And richly doth the Father give to him
Innumerable joys: the vernal shower,
The fresh-blown rose, the sun-clad leafy hill,
Autumnal melancholy—Ah, but all
Are summed in love, imparadised in love;
And uttering His Name, that potent Word
Deep with all worship, holy and divine,
We half-awakened know a trust profound,
A re-assuring for our brooding on,
And feel Him as a unity of love
And truth and beauty,—seen in Jesus Christ—
Immortal values.

And in the high Christ
We drink the chalice of the Life He brings
In pure abundance, suffering a change
Unto eternal values, hence we share
His glorious nature and infinity—
O raptured thought!

But if we are at peace,
In sweet felicity, if we regard
Death as a door into a larger Life
Unending, then most passionate must be
Our lives with consolation for the world.



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